

I Will Come Back (From the Dead For You) by retoxification

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Summary:

You are beautiful when you sleep.

But it's getting a bit old.

Please wake up.

Billy just can't seem to wake up.

I Will Come Back (From the Dead For You)

Author's Note:

I knooooow I should be updating Little Beast. But I have a bit of a writers block and this idea just wouldn't leave me alone.

The title, predictably, is from Richard Sikens 'Crush', and the summary is stolen from 'A Softer World' comics.

As always, thank you to everyone who reads, gives kudos, and comments. I love knowing your thoughts :)

They're tearing through the forest, running as fast as they can get their legs to go. Billy can hear his heartbeat in his ears and feel his lungs ready to burst in his chest.

His breath is misting out in front of him as he runs. It's frigid out, unusually cold for late March.

He thinks his body is going to give out, they've been running so long. But he can't stop.

His system is flooded with adrenaline, giving him the push to keep moving. On his right, Steve looks just as bad. His face is littered with scratches from tree branches, unable to avoid them all while on the run for their lives.

It's the witching hour and the Demogorgon is not far behind. He can hear the monster gaining speed, closing in on them.

He's never been so scared. The monsters he's fought have always been human.

Sometimes, he wishes he never butt his way into Steve's life. Mostly, though, he doesn't regret it at all. Even though him and Steve are in a weird limbo of a relationship, they both want to be more than friends, *so much more*, but neither can quite bring themselves to make

the first move.

He knows most of the details about the Upside Down, but not all. He knows what's happening now was caused by another gate opening.

A new gate opened and a monster thirsty for blood came out of it.

They closed the gate with the help of the chief's daughter but forgot to get the monster back home before shutting and locking the door.

Byers, Wheeler, and Billy all wanted to go after the thing, despite the chief telling them to leave it alone. Steve was reluctant, he wanted to wait for Hopper to call someone with better weapons. Billy didn't want to wait though, and Wheeler and Byers wanted to eliminate this particular threat as quick as possible.

Three against one and Steve ends up following Billy into the dark.

Wheeler and Byers are somewhere in the area. The four of them started off this hunt together but ended getting split up when the monster showed face. They all started running, just not in the same direction.

Billy wants to laugh. They're all idiots, thinking themselves so brave but scatter as soon as the danger came around. They should have listened to Hopper.

Billy wishes that he or Steve had a gun, or any long-range weapon. But all they have is a bat and an axe.

He's trying to shift his focus away from his aching body. The burn in his throat, chest, lungs, and legs. The stitches in his ribs and his seizing calves.

It's a little terrifying, running so hard and for so long. He feels like he's in a dream, running but his legs are slow and lazy, he's not really getting anywhere.

He keeps running until he hears a thud and Steve swearing. He turns back to see Steve on the ground holding his ankle.

"Fuck, shit- fuck!" Billy swears and his heart drops when he sees the

monster come out from the trees.

“GET OUT OF HERE, BILLY!” Steve is screaming at him, the fear clear as day on his face.

He doesn’t even think about it. He throws himself in front of Steve just as the monster gets to him.

It’s pointless though.

He feels a sharp pain and then his body is flying through the air as the Demogorgon tosses him to the side.

When he rolls to his knees and looks towards Steve, he thinks he’s going to hurl.

The Demogorgon’s face is in Steve’s chest, making nasty slurping noises as it devours its meal.

Billy watches in absolute horror and fear.

He’s startled when he hears gunshots and watches as the monster slumps over to the side.

Wheeler is a few seconds too late with her gun.

He knows it’s not her fault, though, that Steve is dead.

It’s his.

If he never pushed him to go out tonight, he would still be safe at home.

~~*~*

The funeral is a sombre affair, which makes sense, because what else would it be?

The official story is that Steve was attacked and killed by a coyote.

It’s stupid and makes Billy angry. How could anyone believe a coyote could take out Steve?

But, he always reminds himself, only a few people know of the shit Steve had fought and lived through.

It's weird to see almost all of their classmate gathered together, many with red eyes glazed over with tears.

Even Tommy is there, looking distraught.

The priest drones on, reciting passages of the bible, *Even though I walk through the darkest valley,*

The words and the mood don't fit the set that this scene is taking place.

It's a beautiful, sunny day. Clear sky, no humidity. It's perfect weather, exactly the kind that Steve loves.

I will fear no evil,

But, Steve isn't here anymore.

Steve's about to get buried six feet under.

Leaving Billy all alone.

for you are with me,

~~*~*

He goes home that night and gets absolutely wasted. He locks himself in his room and works his way through a bottle of cheap whisky.

It's disgusting and burns his throat. It makes him gag but he keeps drinking.

He feels himself starting to slump over, his body finally giving out.

He jerks back up when he hears a noise in the corner of his room- by the closet, he looks up and over and there's Steve.

He's thumbing through one of Billy's many paperbacks, making a face at it.

Billy thinks, a little numbly, *of course the loser wouldn't like Stephen King*.

Steve looks up from the book and smiles at Billy.

"Hey big guy, how's it going?"

Billy knows he has a look of absolute disbelief of his face because, *are you kidding me with this shit?*

"How am- *How am I doing?* You're dead, you died!" Panic is quickly taking over now, Billy doesn't feel drunk at all anymore.

Steve frowns and looks down at himself, like he's expecting the see the big gaping hole his chest was before he got sewn up just to get buried.

"Dead? I don't know... I feel pretty alive right now," Steve jokes, and Billy wants to strangle him.

"How? I saw that thing tear into you- you wear a meal!"

"I'm alive, I can prove it, okay?" Steve does that nodding thing, when he tries to get people to agree with him. Billy's vaguely annoyed when he realizes that he's nodding back. "I'll tell you something only I would know. You know your jean jacket, the one that went missing last month?" Steve pauses and waits for Billy to nod again, "Well it's in my locker at school. You left it in my car and I kept it."

Steve has a faint flush on his cheeks.

"Wha-what? Why?"

"It's like having you there with me. I usually take it home, but I meant to give it back to you last week. Just never got the chance to." Steve is full on blushing now at his admission.

Billy's heart stutters.

"Yeah, okay. Sure, I'll check your locker at school then, tomorrow."

"Perfect," Steve says, smiling at Billy, soft and sweet. "But first, I

need you to do something for me.”

Billy frowns.

“Sure, what?”

Steve stops smiling and now looks too serious.

“You need to wake up.”

“What?” Billy breathes out, confused.

“You need to wake up, Billy,” Steve repeats himself, pleading.

“I don’t understand, I’m not sleep-”

Billy jolts awake.

He’s on his bedroom floor next to an empty bottle.

Billy groans and buries a face in his hands. It feels like he’s lost Steve now a second time.

~~*~*

He’s standing outside of Steve’s locker, fiddling with the lock. He’s nervous.

Byers is standing next to him, frowning.

“I know it’s hard, but Steve’s gone.”

Billy told him about his dream last night, in a fit of desperation.

He sighs and bites his lip.

“I swear man, it was so real.” Billy pauses with his fiddling. “If my jackets in here, it has to mean something...right?”

Jonathan looks unconvinced, but Billy doesn’t let that stop him.

“Like, if it’s in there, Steve’s somewhere out there. He’s trying to talk

to me,” Billy says a little desperately. Acutely aware he must sound certifiably insane.

He finally dials the combination and unhooks the lock.

He takes a deep breath, closing his eyes before swinging the door open.

He opens his eyes again and looks inside.

It’s empty, there’s nothing in the locker.

If he’s honest, he’s a little stunned. He was really expecting to find something.

He stares inside the locker, waiting for his coat to materialize.

Then, there’s a hand on his shoulder, giving him a squeeze. He doesn’t have it in him to shove Byers away.

“I’m sorry, man.” Byers apologizes, sounding sincere as hell. “I can’t even imagine how hard this is for you.”

Billy’s first thought is *‘no, you can’t’*, his second thought is *‘what’s that supposed to mean?’*

Because what was happening between him and Steve, had stayed between him and Steve.

He’s about to ask Byers what he meant by that statement, but he’s interrupted by Wheeler coming up from behind him.

“Billy, I was looking for you.”

“What for?”

“The school wanted to clean out Steve’s locker. Most of it was just books and stuff but there was also this,” she says, as she holds up and arm, which Billy notices is carrying his jean jacket.

He thinks he stops breathing for a second.

He looks at Byers, who’s eyes are wide and shocked.

Wheeler looks between the two of them, picking up on the odd energy.

“What?” She questions, a bit warily.

~~*~*

Billy ends up spilling his dream from last night to Wheeler and while at first, she does look a little perturbed, she quickly gathers herself.

“I don’t know Billy...he might have told you he had your jacket before he-um, before that night.”

“No, no I didn’t know. I thought I had lost this a long time ago. It’s my favourite jacket, I would’ve remembered if Harrington told me if he had it.” He says, a little too fiercely, feeling defensive.

“It wouldn’t be out of place for you to forget something like that, Billy. Grief affects everyone differently,” Byers butts in. Billy really wants to tell him to shut up and mind his own business.

He knows Steve is alive and out there, he just doesn’t know how to prove it.

Billy goes home, feeling bitter and alone. Thinking viciously, and a little unfairly, that they don’t really care about Steve since they have one another.

~~*~*

California is beautiful year-round. No matter what, there’s always the ocean, hordes of pretty people, and a million and one things to do.

Right now, though, Billy is enjoying a walk on the beach with Steve.

They’re walking barefoot through the sand, not really talking, just enjoying the peace of one another’s company.

It’s perfect, well, close to perfect. Billy misjudged the weather and it’s a bit chilly out, a little bit of a breeze by the water. He wishes he

listened to Steve and brought a jacket with him.

As he's regretting his choice in attire he feels a hand settling into his, fingers weaving with his own.

When he looks over at Steve the other boy is smiling at him.

Billy smiles back, and while he feels warm inside from Steve's gentle affection, it doesn't stop his body shivering against the wind.

Steve notices and is obviously trying to hold back a smirk. Apparently, he's too good now to rub in a fairly earned *'I told you so.'*

"Feelin' a little chilly there, Hargrove?"

Billy glares at him. Really can't remember why he was so insistent not to bring something warmer along to cover himself up with.

Steve keeps grinning and untangles his fingers from Billy's. He's shrugs off his Members Only jacket and places it over Billy's shoulders.

"I'm not a girl Harrington," Billy snarks, but he can't help but laugh, delighted by this silly act of chivalry. "I think this might be too small for me, actually."

Steve rolls his eyes, trying to look annoyed and ultimately failing.

"Listen, let me just have this. I like looking at you in my clothes."

Billy, to his utter mortification, blushes.

"Sure Harrington, if it makes you feel better." It come out a little too affectionate, but Billy's not trying to hide his feelings. Not anymore. "What do you want to do now? I know a good spot to look at the stars."

It's silly and romantic and usually the kind of thing he says he hates.

"Yeah, that'd be great," Steve nods, excited with a smile.

But, Billy really wants to do silly and romantic things with Steve.

Like, all the time.

“I wish I could convince the others that you’re still alive.” Billy wishes, more than anything, he could prove to everyone that Steve was happy, healthy, and *whole*.

Steve tilts his head, a little confused.

“You can, Billy. All you need to do is wake up.”

Billy’s heart stops.

“Wha- Don’t! Don’t say that!”

“Billy, please, wake up!” The other boy has grabbed him by the shoulders and is shaking him.

Steve’s happy face is long gone and Billy’s feelings of serenity have fled.

“No! NO! Don’t say that, don’t-”

and Billy wakes up.

He’s by himself in his bed, feeling unbearably alone.

As he sits up to check his clock, he feels something drop off his shoulders.

When he reaches around to grab what it was, he’s startled to find a jacket.

He’s even more startled to find it’s Steve’s Member Only Jacket.

“Holy shit.”

~~*~*

He only has to wait a couple hours before it’s an appropriate time to head to school.

He dresses blindly and makes sure to grab Steve’s jacket, so he can

toss it in his car. It's his irrefutable proof that Steve is somewhere out there- alive and alone.

When he makes it to the school he sees Byers and Wheeler and pulls his car up next to them.

He's so excited, he almost starts talking before he's even out of the car.

"I had another dream last night, Harrington gave me his jacket and when I woke up, I still had it!"

Wheeler's face pinches and Byers looks uncomfortable.

"Look I'll show-" he starts but breaks off when he realizes he can't find the jacket in the back seat. "It was here! I put it here this morning!"

All that's there is his brown leather jacket.

Wheeler looks close to crying and Byers looks a little angry.

"Look, man, I know you miss him. We ALL miss him. But, you can't keep doing this, it's not fair. We all want him to be alive." The *'but he's dead'* is left unsaid. Byers looks exhausted, just like Wheeler, just like Max, just like Billy. Losing Steve has hit them all hard.

"What if he's trapped, you know? Like, where all the other Demogorgons are?" Billy thinks it's plausible, after all, stranger things have happened.

"You saw what he looked like, Billy," Wheeler is the toughest chick he knows, but her voice still wavers. "There's no way he survived that."

Billy's throat clicks when he swallows.

"Yeah, yeah I guess you're right. Sorry..." He doesn't know what else to say. Knows he should let this go so he can move on. But he can't. He feels plagued by Steve's memory, he doesn't really want to move on from him. "I'll catch you guys later, okay?"

When he hears their murmurs of agreement he heads off into the school. He dreads being here, without Steve. Doesn't know how he's going to keep living without the other boy by his side. It's ridiculous and dramatic, but Billy doesn't really give a fuck.

It feels like the Demogorgon ripped apart his chest too and tore his heart straight out.

~~*~*

Billy's walking through the cemetery making his way to Steve's plot.

He hasn't been here since the day of the funeral and figures visiting might help him get some closure.

It might help him accept Steve's gone and that he needs to move on.

He has another bottle of whiskey with him, because he sure as fuck can't do this sober. He's not drunk, just a bit tipsy. Just enough to take the edge off of things.

It's dark so he doesn't see the tree root sticking out from the ground and stumbles. He catches himself on the tree trunk and take a deep breath. He really doesn't want to brain himself on a gravestone.

As he's holding himself against the tree, trying to gather his bearings, he notices a pulsing red light coming from the tree trunk.

It takes a second, and then the tree trunk is opening.

Billy panics, thinking another gate has opened and another monster is coming out for dinner. He has no weapons and he's not at his peak.

He's frozen to the spot panicking until he realizes a hand is trying to claw its way through the slime.

A normal, human hand.

Billy stares, transfixed, as the hole in the tree grows large enough for a full body to come out. It takes him almost a minute to realize he's staring at Steve.

He slaps himself in the face and pinches his arm a couple times to make sure he's actually awake.

It's not until Steve groans and starts coughing that Billy remembers himself and rushes to help the other boy up.

"Holy fucking- Jesus Christ, Harrington, fuck." He can't believe it, that he was right. That Steve was trapped and alone and nobody was looking for him. "Are you okay? Can you walk?"

He's doing a physical pat down of Steve's body, making sure everything's accounted for. Making sure there's no gaping holes in his chest.

Steve looks around a little numbly.

"Wha-where am I? Am I out?" He's disjointed and in shock. Clearly not believing he's out of that place full of death. That he's safe, with Billy.

"Ye-yeah, you're okay. I got you, I've got you," Billy says, quietly and fiercely. He has Steve tucked up tight to him, has his face buried in the other boy's hair, breathing in.

He doesn't really give a shit about him being covered in nasty goop, smelling like decay.

He can't believe he has Steve safe and alive in his arms.

"We need to go to Joyce, we need to tell everyone you're alive, okay?" Billy questions, pulling back to catch Steve's eye. When the other boy nods, Billy smiles softly at him. "They're going to be so happy to see you."

It's surreal, the walk to the Byers' household. Billy keeps staring at Steve, terrified the other boy is either going to disappear before his eyes. He just wants to hold onto Steve tight, be selfish for a little while, and keep the news to himself. Keep Steve's attention to himself, just- just for a little while.

Instead, he settles for holding Steve's hand.

The other boy isn't talking but he seems to be okay. He's not limping or having trouble breathing or anything. He has a couple scratches here and there, and is a little filthy, otherwise, he appears to be in good shape.

When they make it to the front door Billy turns to Steve and gives his hand a gentle squeeze.

It's only around 10PM or so, too early for everyone to be asleep, but too late for visitors.

He doubts Joyce is really going to mind once she sees who's at her door.

He raises his hand and knocks, maybe a little too aggressively, and waits.

It's Jonathan who answers the door and Billy wishes he had a camera to take a picture of his face.

It flashes through a series of emotions and settles on *happy*.

"Oh-oh my god, MOM! MOM IT'S STEVE! HE'S ALIVE!" He yells as he's turning around and running back into the house.

The boys follow him inside, Billy walking Steve over to the couch and sitting down next to him.

It's a matter of seconds later before Joyce bursts into the room, all wild energy. She looks at Steve, in shock, in disbelief.

It's not long after that her little house is filled with guests, coming to see Steve.

Wheeler alternates between laughing and crying. She always has a smile on, though, sitting next to Steve, opposite of Billy.

The kids, especially Dustin, were ecstatic to see their babysitter alive. They had all given him rib-bruising hugs, trying to hide their tears of relief and joy.

It's nearly two before Joyce manages to get everyone to settle down.

She tells the kids that Steve will still be here in the morning, but he, and they, need to rest.

She helps set up some sleeping bags, next to the couch, for Steve and Billy. Making sure they're comfortable, knowing they won't want to be apart.

As soon as she heads off to bed, Billy zips the sleeping bags together, so he can cuddle with Steve. Not caring about the possibility of someone finding them like this in the morning, wanting to indulge in this small comfort.

"You had me worried, pretty boy," Billy whispers into the dark, unable to go to sleep yet. "I thought I wasn't going to see you again."

"Careful Hargrove, gonna have me thinking you're growing soft or something."

Billy can hear the tease and smile in his voice. He lifts his arm when he feels Steve turning around, so they're laying face-to-face.

"I was terrified I lost you," He wants to be honest, needs Steve to know how much he means to him. Times so short and precious to waste it. "I- I love you, Steve."

It was the most honest and scariest thing he's ever said out loud but seeing the look of happiness on Steve's face made the risk worth it.

"I love you, too." Billy can see and hear the smile in Steve's voice.

"I'm glad we have that sorted," Billy jokes, or tries too. Judging by the way the smile slides off Steve's face, it didn't land.

"Not quite, Billy."

"Wh-what?" His heart breaks a little bit, thinking that Steve doesn't want to be with him.

"You need to wake up."

His heart slams into his ribcage, leaving him bruised and winded.

“No, no, no, don- don’t say that! I’m awake, we’re awake!”

“Billy, please, you need to wake up, please!” Steve’s crying and Billy’s losing his mind.

“SHUT UP! I’M AWAKE, GOD DAMNIT, I’M AWA-”

When he wakes up he’s lying on the cold grass with a massive headache.

He winces when he touches the wound on his forehead, he looks to the side and see’s a gravestone. He thinks he must have hit his head when he tripped.

He can’t help the hysterical laugh, that’s building inside his chest, nor can he help when he breaks down crying.

Everything hurts.

He keeps losing Steve and he doesn’t know how much longer he can go on like this.

~~*~*

He’s a wreck, the next day. He can’t concentrate, can’t think, can’t eat, can’t sleep.

He can’t do anything without thinking about Steve and how realistic that dream felt.

How it felt to finally hold him, hear him talking again.

There’s crater (monster) sized hole in his chest, leaving him empty and hallow.

The day passes by in a blur, he’s can barely sit still, desperate to get home.

He knows what he needs to do if he wants this insanity to end.

~~*~*

By the time he makes it through the front door and into his room, he can barely hold himself up.

He drops his bag on the ground and kicks his boots off as he crawls into bed.

He lays there, thinking, wondering, if anyone would miss him. Like, actually miss him.

The grief and heartache's slowly killing him, he's just going to speed things up a bit.

He sits up and grabs his bag off the floor and starts digging through it, he finds what he needs and tosses the bag back off the bed.

In one hand he has a polaroid of him and Steve, grinning like idiots at the camera, arms hanging over each other's shoulders. Billy can't fight the small smile that comes to his face, seeing Steve looking so happy.

In the other hand is a near full bottle of Vicodin. He figures if he swallows the bottle he's either going to be asleep for a real long time or he'll croak. If he's honest, both options seem appealing at this point.

It's when he's popping off the top of the bottle he hears his bedroom door open.

His heart stops thinking it's Max or his dad. When he glances up, it's worse, it's neither of them.

Steve's standing in the doorway looking so broken-hearted.

"Baby, please don't do this," his deep voice is soft and pleading-scared. "Whatever it is, we can get you through it okay, but please don't hurt yourself."

Billy chokes on a sob, then laughs.

"The only time I'm happy is when I'm with you, dreaming. It's the only time I feel sane."

“You can be with me, though,” and shit, doesn’t Steve look so earnest? “All you need to do is wake up.”

“I am awake! I don’t understand, Steve,” He’s full-on crying at this point, nothing is stopping the tears. “I don’t understand what’s happening to me. I’m fucking terrified,” he chokes on a particularly harsh sob, swallows the buildup of saliva in his mouth. “I’m going crazy, I don’t want to feel like this anymore.”

He feels Steve, or whatever this thing that looks like Steve, settle on his bed. There’s a gentle hand on his face, tilting his chin up.

“I don’t know if you can hear me, or understand me, but I love you. I love you and I need you to wake up for me, please, wake up, Billy.” Steve’s crying too now, and Billy doesn’t know what to do.

“I love you, too,” it comes out little more than a whisper, “I love you, too and I want to be with you, I just don’t know how. How can I wake up if I’m not asleep?”

~~*~*

The hospital room is quiet, save for the sound of the machinery and the gentle cadence of Steve’s voice.

He’s gripping onto Billy’s limp hand, whispering to him. Telling him he loves him and that he needs to come back now.

Soon, he feels the hand in his clench, sees the body in the bed start shifting.

His heart stops in his chest, because it’s been four days since Billy took a hit to the head and it’s about time he woke up.

~~*~*

Billy groans as he opens his eyes. The light in the room is harsh, burning and sterile.

He hears his name getting called softly next to him.

He turns his head towards the voice and his heart stops. This is just getting cruel now.

“Pretty boy, what am I going to do?” His voice is rough and his throat aches, like he hasn’t seen water in days or spoken in weeks.

Steve must not hear him because his face lights right up as soon as Billy opens mouth.

“I can’t- holy shit, I can’t believe you’re awake,” Steve says, a bit reverently. His eyes are misty, and now that Billy’s really looking, his face is splotchy and a little swollen, like he’s been crying for a long time.

Billy can’t stand that look.

He tries to speak again but ends up coughing, his throat too dry. Steve, ever attentive, scrambles to get a water cup with a straw and brings it to Billy’s mouth. He hadn’t noticed how thirsty he was until he starts sucking the water down quickly enough he thinks he’s going to choke.

“Hey, not too fast, you’ll make yourself sick,” Steve chides, pulling the cup away from Billy.

Billy can’t help but think that this feels different from all the other times he’s seen Steve.

It’s so much more real.

“Steve, I need you to do something for me,” it comes off a little pleading, maybe a little desperate. It doesn’t matter. He needs to make sure.

“What, what do you need?” Steve is hopeful and determined, ready for whatever Billy might request.

“Tell me to wake up.”

“What?” Steve’s confused, and possibly concerned. “You’re...you’re not sleeping. How can you wake up?”

“Please, just,” Billy swallows around the lump in his throat. He’s full of nerves and he needs this from Steve. “Please, just tell me to wake up.”

Steve’s frowning but regardless,

“Okay, um, wake up, Billy.”

Billy holds his breath, and nothing happens. Nothing changes. He’s still in a hospital room, sore as hell, and Steve’s still next to him.

He doesn’t know what going on, not in the slightest, but he’s overwhelmed with relief that Steve is still here. That he hasn’t disappeared.

“What happened to me?” But he really should find out what has happened.

Steve tells him in between tears of relief about how Billy’s been in a coma for the last four days. That when he made that stupid, *brave*, move of trying to save Steve from the Demogorgon, he got himself knocked out. The monster had thrown him against a tree taking him out for the count. Luckily, Wheeler got there in time with her shotgun and took the monsters head clean off.

It takes him a while to absorb this.

He’s so fucking grateful that Steve is alive. It’s overwhelming, the relief. He knows he’s crying, again, but he couldn’t give a shit. Not when Steve’s next to him.

“You okay?” Steve asks, reaching forward to tuck some of Billy’s hair behind his ear.

He grimaces, realizing that he *really* needs a shower.

“Yeah, just...” and how can he put this into words? How can he really explain what was happening inside his head while he was out.

He knows, right now, he can’t. The wounds are still too fresh, the grief of losing Steve still there, in the back of his mind. He knows he’ll tell this story, eventually, but right now, all he wants to do is forget

about that horror show.

Steve waits for him to finish his sentence, patiently.

But Billy doesn't know what words to use. So, he does the next best thing.

He gestures Steve to come closer and once he's near enough, Billy brings a hand up to drag the boy into a kiss.

Steve lets out shocked noise, like he wasn't expecting it, but quickly melts into Billy's embrace.

The kiss lasts longer than Billy originally intended. The soft, sweet slide of their lips together.

The tip of Steve's tongue teases Billy's bottom lip, seeking entrance. Billy lets him deepen the kiss, and it's good, *so good*, this gentle intimacy. It's like a balm to every open wound, to every exposed nerve.

Billy thinks that everything else can wait a little longer. Reality and dealing with everyone else can just wait.

Author's Note:

This was inspired by an episode of Futurama called 'The Sting'. Of course, the show was much more comedic about it than I was.

I didn't want to spoil the ending for anything who's watched this episode, hence why this acknowledgement is down here.